

CHAPTER 80. EVALUATE SHORT-TERM ESCALATION PROCEDURES

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND

1. PROGRAM TRACKING AND REPORTING SUBSYSTEM (PTRS) ACTIVITY CODES.

A. Maintenance:

- With Reliability Program: 3332
- Without Reliability Program: 3316

B. Avionics:

- With Reliability Program: 5332
- Without Reliability Program: 5316

3. OBJECTIVE. This chapter provides guidance for approving short-term escalation procedures based on operations specifications.

5. GENERAL. Time limitations are maintenance intervals established by the provisions of an approved reliability program or by an operator-established maintenance monitoring program. They are based on continuing analysis and surveillance of a fleet's operating performance. Since operators try to avoid delays due to units being operated to the point of failure, the time limitations used are a conservative average. An operator therefore may need to adjust these intervals for an individual component, engine or aircraft.

A. Use of a Short-Term Escalation.

(1) Under controlled conditions, an operator may use a short-term escalation for an individual component, engine or aircraft without affecting safety. These procedures require close monitoring to ensure that they do not conceal unsound maintenance practices, maintenance program deficiencies, or poor management decisions.

(2) Each short-term escalation for aircraft, systems, or units not subject to a reliability program, plus all

extended escalations, require prior approval by the assigned principal inspector.

(3) Operators on a reliability program do not require prior approval before using an escalation. The operator must, however, inform the certificate-holding district office (CHDO) of an escalation as soon as possible after the escalation is put into effect.

(4) A short-term escalation should only be used after carefully analyzing the history of the aircraft and its components. A review of the proposed escalation should include:

- Previous inspections results
- Supplemental/additional inspections that may be needed to ensure continued airworthiness during the escalation
- Items not covered by the escalation. The escalation must not cause these items to exceed their maintenance intervals

(5) Maximum short-term escalation intervals may be a percentage of an existing interval for a particular inspection, or may be designated in hours of service, in cycles, or in other increments. Except under certain conditions, maximum time for an escalation is 500 hours time-in-service or its equivalent. It must not be used repetitively to, in effect, constitute a fleet time extension.

B. Extension of Short-term Escalations. The 500-hour maximum time limit for an escalation is usually sufficient for an operator to position and/or repair the affected item. Occasionally, an operator cannot effectively accomplish the task within this time limit. After an in-depth review of this situation, an individual item may be extended beyond the 500-hour limit. In order to do this, an operator must submit justification to the principal airworthiness inspector before approval. This extension remains in effect for a prescribed time limit unless the component or inspection is accomplished before the time limit.

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SECTION 2. PROCEDURES

1. PREREQUISITES AND COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS.

A. Prerequisites:

- Knowledge of the regulatory requirements of 14 CFR parts 121 and 135, as applicable
- Successful completion of Airworthiness Inspector's Indoctrination Course for General Aviation and Air Carrier Inspections, or previous equivalent

B. *Coordination.* This task requires coordination between the principal airworthiness inspector and the operator.

3. REFERENCES, FORMS, AND JOB AIDS.

A. *References.* None.

B. Forms:

- FAA Form 8400-8, Operations Specifications

C. Job Aids:

- Automated operations specifications checklists and worksheets

5. PROCEDURES. Review the applicant's short-term escalation procedures. Ensure that the procedures accomplish the following:

A. List the operator's management personnel with escalation approval authority. These personnel must have at least the equivalent authority for approving:

- An operations specifications time increase
- A maintenance interval adjustment controlled by a reliability program

B. Define the maximum limitations for a short-term escalation.

C. Contain criteria that defines the type of data acceptable for justifying a short-term escalation.

D. Correspond with the overall maintenance program. The procedures must ensure that an escalation will not create an unsafe condition.

E. Restrict the occurrence of repetitive short-term escalations that indicate a need for a change in the maintenance program.

F. Provide a method for recording all escalations, with provisions for submitting/reporting each request/use of an escalation to the CHDO.

7. TASK OUTCOMES.

A. File PTRS Data Sheet.

B. Completion of this task will result in one of the following:

(1) A letter to the operator indicating disapproval of the short-term escalation authorization.

(2) An amendment to the operator's operation specifications, if applicable, approving short-term escalation authorization.

C. *Document Task.* File all supporting paperwork in the operator's office file.

9. FUTURE ACTIVITIES. Close monitoring of the operation may be required to ensure the following:

- Authorization is not being abused
- Manual procedures are being followed